

Who Dies as a Pedestrian?

The next few pages describe a typical day for American pedestrians. Eighteen pedestrians died October 21, 1992, but none made the national headlines. The presidential campaigns and the World Series dominated the news. It was a tragic yet typical day for persons on foot in America. This one day presents a clear picture of how pedestrians of all ages, in every region of the country encounter great problems just getting from place to place.

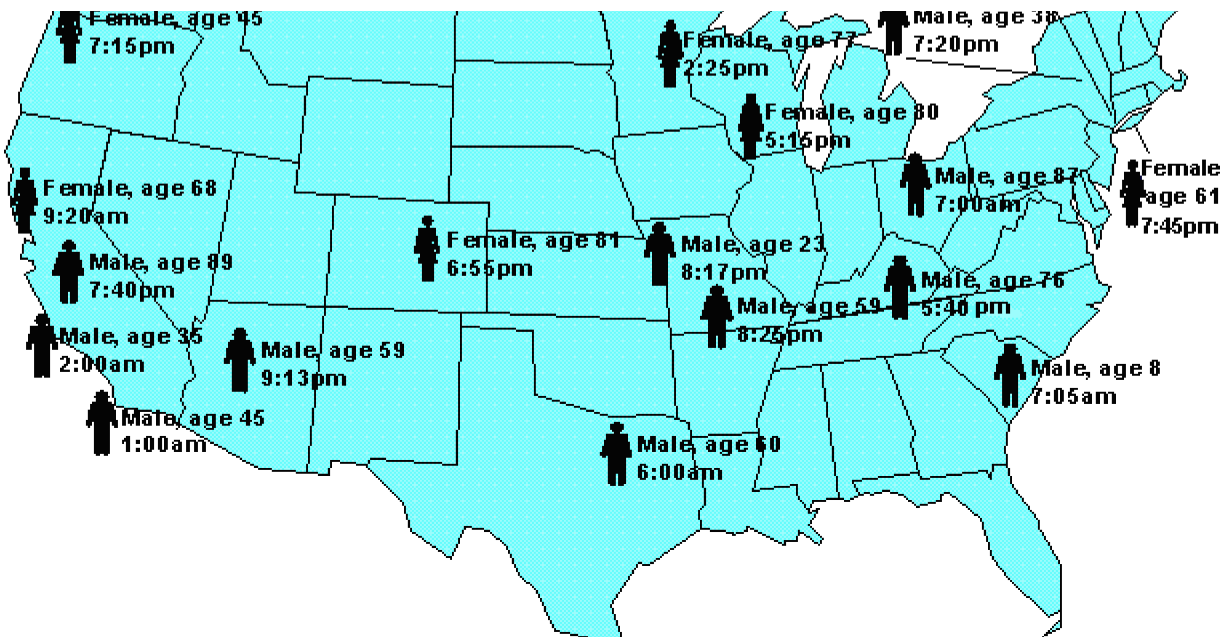
Each year in the U.S., almost 6,000 pedestrians are killed by motor vehicles. That's about 16 people hit and killed each day. Pedestrians account for one of every six traffic-related deaths. In addition, some 110,000 people walking or standing near a roadway suffer serious injuries each year.

Those pedestrians who died October 21 ranged in age from eight to 89. They died as early as 1 a.m. and as late as 9:13 p.m. Some were crossing streets improperly, others were run down by reckless drivers. Most of the pedestrians and drivers were sober. Some, however, had BACs as high as .32 percent.

The events that claimed 18 lives are recounted briefly on the next pages. These descriptions give a glimpse of the complex nature of pedestrian crashes. Males and females in all parts of the country died that day on high-speed expressways, low-volume country roads and while crossing city streets.

It was a typical day in America for pedestrians.

Click an area of the map for more information.



U.S. Pedestrian Deaths, October 21, 1992



1:00 a.m. San Diego County, California	The first pedestrian crash of the day occurred when a 45-year-old male was struck and killed while walking or standing on a hilly, curved section of roadway. The driver, a 27-year-old male, was rounding the curve at a speed well below the posted limit. He braked and steered in an effort to avoid hitting the pedestrian, but could not. No violations were charged.
2:00 a.m. Los Angeles, California	The second pedestrian crash of the day killed one person and seriously injured another. A hit-and-run driver on a main thoroughfare hit and killed a 35-year-old male and severely injured a 36-year-old female. Neither victim had been drinking alcohol before the crash.
3:30 a.m. New York City, New York	A male, age 38, walking along a Manhattan street became the day's third pedestrian fatality. A male driver, improperly backing a Mack truck, hit and killed the pedestrian. Police concluded that alcohol was not involved.
6:00 a.m. Panola County, Texas	Foggy conditions may have contributed to the fourth fatal pedestrian crash of the day. A male, age 60, was hit while walking or standing along a high-speed, arterial roadway. The victim and the driver were sober.
7:00 a.m. Stark County, Ohio	An 87-year-old male was killed when he walked into a passenger car operated by a female driver, 24 years old. Officials filed no charges in this fifth pedestrian crash of the day.
7:05 a.m. Horry County, South Carolina	The sixth and youngest victim of the day was an 8-year-old boy. The boy was crossing the street to board his school bus when a car illegally passed another truck and killed the youngster. The driver was a 19-year-old male.
9:20 a.m. Dale City, California	A van travelling at a high rate of speed ran off the road, hit a utility pole and then struck and killed a female, 68 years old. In this seventh fatal crash involving a pedestrian, the driver (male, 47) also sustained serious injuries. Alcohol was not involved.
2:25 p.m. Braham, Minnesota	A driver described as inattentive hit and killed a female, age 77, as she crossed at an intersection. The 38-year-old male was driving a pickup. Alcohol was not involved in this eight fatal collision of the day.

5:15 p.m. Milwaukee, Wisconsin	The ninth pedestrian fatal accident occurred when an 80-year-old female was killed. She walked into a travel lane, near an intersection, and was struck by a vehicle driven by a male, age 54.
5:40 p.m. Salt Gum, Kentucky	A 76-year-old male became the tenth pedestrian fatality when he was struck and killed along a 55 mph section of roadway. The driver, an 18-year-old female, was rounding a curve and attempted to steer and brake to avoid the man. Officials filed no charges.
6:55 p.m. Boulder, Colorado	Reckless driving led to the eleventh pedestrian death of the day. A 17-year-old male was charged with reckless driving after he hit and killed an 81-year-old woman along a 30 mph roadway.
7:15 p.m. Portland, Oregon	A 45-year-old woman died when she improperly attempted to cross a 35 mph principal roadway, becoming the day's twelfth pedestrian victim. The 38-year-old female driver involved was not charged in the collision.
7:20 p.m. South Farmingdale, New York	Alcohol played a role in the day's thirteenth pedestrian fatality. A 38-year-old male with a BAC of .24 percent was struck and killed along a roadway with a 40 mph speed limit. Police determined that the driver, a 34-year-old male, was acting properly, and brought no charges.
7:40 p.m. Cupertino, California	A vehicle being driven below the posted speed limit hit and killed an 89-year-old male pedestrian, the fourteenth death of the day. A 50-year-old female drove the vehicle involved. Alcohol was not a factor.
7:45 p.m. North Bellport, New York	The fifteenth pedestrian to die was the victim of a hit-and-run collision. The 61-year-old female pedestrian died when a vehicle driven by a male, age 39, struck her. The driver was apprehended later, and charged with driving while impaired and leaving the scene of an accident.
8:17 p.m. Independence, Missouri	A 23-year-old male with a BAC of .11 percent became the day's sixteenth pedestrian fatality when he tried to cross a roadway at an intersection with no traffic lights. The 32-year-old driver involved was described as swerving to avoid the pedestrian, but may have contributed to the crash by leaving the proper travel lane.
8:25 p.m. St. Louis, Missouri	An early-evening crash produced the seventeenth pedestrian fatality when a 59-year-old male was struck and killed at a signalized intersection. Officials determined that the pedestrian had a BAC of .20 percent. The driver, a male, age 44, had his vision obscured by a large vehicle and its load.

9:13 p.m.
Phoenix,
Arizona

Alcohol influenced the eighteenth and last crash of the day to claim a pedestrian's life. A 59-year-old male was hit and killed by a vehicle driven by a 36-year-old female. The pedestrian's BAC was .32 percent. Police indicated the driver was also impaired, but her BAC is unknown. The driver had a previous DWI conviction and license suspension.



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration